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FREE RADICAL SCAVENGING AND MEMBRANE PROTECTIVE EFFECTS OF METHANOL EXTRACTED FRACTIONS OF PARSLEY

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Free radical scavenging and membrane protective activity of the methanol extracts of the herb of *Petroselinum crispum* (Mill.) Nym. ex A. W. Hill., parsley were evaluated with chemiluminometric and ascorbic acid induced lipidperoxidation methods. Apiin was used as reference material. Good correlation was observed between the chemiluminometric and the membrane protective activity of the samples.

Keywords: *Petroselinum crispum*, parsley, antioxidant, free radical scavenging, lipidperoxidation

Parsley [*Petroselinum crispum* (Mill.) Nym. ex A. W. Hill.] is a small bienial flowering plant bearing greatly divided pinnately compound leaves. Parsley is extensively employed as a culinary herb for garnishing and seasoning. The seeds have strong diuretic activity due to the high essential oil content (WARNCKE, 1992). The leaves are wildely used as spice. Characteristic constituents are essential oils (apiol, myristicin), flavonoids (apiin, luteolin-, apigenin-glycosides), cumarines (bergapten, imperatorin) and ascorbic acid (HÄNSEL et al., 1994).

Considering the present information about spices – paying more attention to their free radical scavenger and antioxidant activity – the reconsideration of these plants is a very promising area in understanding their value. Since in the literature no information could be found about the antioxidant activity of parsley, we intended to provide evidence that *Petroselinum crispum* (Mill.) Nym. ex. A. W. Hill. extracts have free radical scavenging and membrane protective effects.

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